

SENATE BILL 489

By Campfield

AN ACT relative to recognition of Indian tribes in
Tennessee.

WHEREAS, many Indians in Tennessee are part of a “tribe”, “band” or “group” of Native American Indian people comprised of numerous families, clans, or generations together with their descendents, whose core members of the tribe, band or group are related to each other by blood and who are recognized as descending from a historical Tennessee tribe, band, or group; and

WHEREAS, state recognition by Tennessee would provide enormous personal satisfaction and commercial incentives to such Indians who can better market their clothing, art, crafts, and other unique talents and services; and

WHEREAS, state recognition would ratify a sense of self, of belonging to a culture, of acknowledgement of a venerable heritage and tradition that have been dampened or lost over the years; and

WHEREAS, criteria for determining state recognition of Indians in Tennessee need to be carefully studied, reviewed, and determined; now, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. There is created a task force to conduct a study of state recognition of Indian tribes in Tennessee. Such study shall recommend criteria to be applied when establishing state recognition standards and qualifications.

SECTION 2. The task force shall consist of three (3) persons appointed by the speaker of the senate, three (3) persons appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives, one (1) person appointed by the senate sponsor of the bill creating the task force, and one (1) person appointed by the house of representatives sponsor of the bill creating the task force.

SECTION 3. All appropriate state agencies shall provide assistance to the task force upon request of the chair.

SECTION 4. The task force shall be convened by the member designated by the speaker of the senate as being the initial chair of the task force, and at its first meeting the task force shall elect from among its membership a chair, vice-chair, and such other officers the task force deems necessary.

SECTION 5. Members shall not receive compensation for serving on the committee and shall not be reimbursed for attendance at meetings.

SECTION 6. The task force shall timely report its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the one hundred and ninth general assembly no later than February 1, 2015, at which time the task force shall cease to exist.

SECTION 7. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.